

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS MEMORANDUM

This memorandum summarizes a site survey performed on July 18, 2008 to evaluate the condition of ADA-mandated accessibility at the Fire Station in Pembroke Massachusetts. After a description of the site and interior conditions of the building, recommended improvements are provided in Section 7, beginning on page 8.

2. SPECIFIC SITE

The subject property is the Pembroke Fire Station at 172 Center Street, at the corner of Elliot Avenue.



3. NAME AND LOCATION OF SITE

- a. The Fire Station is located on a 2.01-acre Town-owned site (Parcel C9-30), fronting primarily on Center Street to the West, with additional vehicle access from Elliot Avenue to the South. It is not adjacent to any other Town facilities but lies approximately 600 feet to the South of the Town Hall / Police Station / Recreation Center / Council on Aging / Library complex.

4. EXISTING CONDITION OF FACILITY

a. Existing Conditions

- i. Primary uses: The Fire Station is used for typical Public Safety administrative, staff and emergency service purposes. There is limited public access.
- ii. Hours of Operation: The Fire Station is a first-responder facility and is open 24 hours a day, seven day a week. It has no secondary municipal function.
- iii. Employee access needs: Fire Department employees include fire fighters and and some administrative staff. Fire fighters are by definition able-bodied as a condition of their job responsibilities and have no special accessibility requirements. The access needs of administrative staff and public visitors to the facility are assumed to be the same as that of the general public.

- b.
- c. Nature of site and building development

The Fire Station is a 2-story masonry structure with walk-out basement, initially constructed in 1976. The Pembroke Assessor's records indicate a total of 11,080 sq. ft. of floor space, with a current building value of \$784,400.

- d. Surrounding Town uses

The Fire Station has no immediately adjacent Town uses; the municipal complex is approximately 600 feet to the North, along the same street but separated by commercial properties.

5. CONDITIONS OF FACILITY ACCESS

- a. Approach to parking lot, parking spaces and signage

The Fire Station is marked by a single sign above the apparatus bay doors, clearly visible from Center Street. There are three paved parking areas around the building, containing approximately 36 marked parking spaces. Two of the marked spaces are designated as accessible, one near the apparatus bays facing Center Street and one along the North side access driveway. There are no marked access aisles or a van-accessible space. There is no direct sidewalk access from a public way.

The condition of accessible parking spaces and the accessible route to the building entrance is poor. The North side accessible space has excessive cross-slope and back-to-front slope.



The accessible space adjacent to the apparatus bays has a vertical sign but no pavement marking for the space or its access aisle. In addition, the driveway leading to this space is marked “Do Not Enter”, the path to the building entrance crosses an emergency vehicle exit path, and the condition of pavement is poor.



The sidewalks leading from the parking areas to the main Fire Station entrance have excessive slope, both in the direction of travel and across it. They lack the railings and level landings which would be required for ADA-compliance. Due to the necessary vertical rise, it does not appear that there is sufficient space to correct these deficiencies within the current alignment of the sidewalk or the location of accessible parking.



b. Entrance and access to primary uses

i. Door and Sill – Main (front) entrance

The main entrance is not accessible, primarily due to an excessive vertical step (approximately 2-1/2”) between the exterior landing and the building floor. In addition, the exterior landing exceeds the 1:48 ADA maximum slope. The outer door swings out, and may also interfere with ADA door clearance requirements at the landing. The threshold at the interior side of the entry door is also higher than the ADA maximum of 1/2”. Door hardware is non-compliant. There is no power door operator; although this is not required it does not meet the standard of other Town buildings and can reduce certain door clearance requirements.



ii. Directional signage to primary uses within building

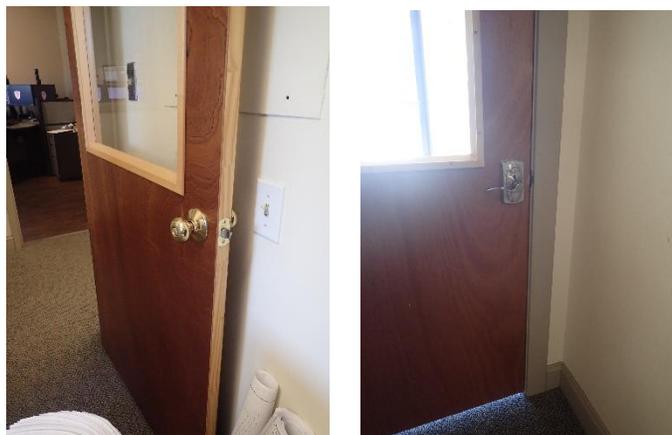
The interior signage provided at the Fire Station is limited and typically does not meet ADA standards. Some permanent rooms and spaces are clearly identified, but the signage is not mounted at consistent heights or locations and lacks the required raised lettering and Braille characters.

However, we note that most public access to the Fire Station is limited to the main entrance vestibule.

iii. Doorways and Door Hardware

No interior or exterior doors or doorways observed at the Fire Station conform to ADA accessibility standards. This is typically due to one or more of the following conditions:

- Lack of appropriate hardware. Most doors have standard doorknobs, which cannot be operated with a closed fist or without grasping. Lever



handles or simple push-pull hardware are required. In the few instances where lever-type hardware is provided, door clearances are non-compliant.

- Lack of adequate side clearance at doors. A minimum 18" clearance is required at the latch-pull side of any passage or entry door. In some cases, this is the result of furniture placed too close to the door; in other

cases the door swing or location is problematic. In addition, where automatic door closers are used, a minimum 12" clearance is also required at the latch *push* side; however, few if any automatic closers were noted at the Fire Station, except at exterior doors.

iv. Counter and Service Windows

ADA Height for transaction area – 36" max.

The writing counter is approximately 42" high, and the service windows are between 41" and 45" high, which all exceed the ADA limit of 36".



c. Access to staff and other services

i. Signage and floor; functionality (height and visibility):

As noted above, the Interior signage at the Fire Station does not generally meet ADA standards.

ii. Lower level accessibility:

The lower level contains no public functions and is not currently accessible from the exterior or interior of the building. A kitchen/lounge area, laundry, storage area and gym are included. There is no elevator or chair lift to provide accessibility to the main floor.

There is an exterior doorway which has an ADA-compliant threshold, but door clearances and exterior grading do not currently allow access.

d. Restroom facilities

i. The first-floor Men's and Women's restrooms at the main level of the Fire Station offer some degree of accessibility, but there are multiple non-compliant conditions, as follows:

ii. First Floor Men's Locker / Toilet Room

This room is not designated as accessible. The exterior signage is not ADA-compliant. The interior of the locker and toilet room is non-compliant in several respects:

- Supply and waste piping beneath the lavatories is not covered or insulated.

- Mirrors are mounted above the ADA maximum of 40"
- One toilet stall has been outfitted for accessibility; however, it lacks regulation grab bars (one is mounted to the stall door, and the rear grab bar is missing), and the stall is too narrow.
- The urinal stall is narrower than the ADA standard of 30", and the urinal may be mounted too high.
- The showers lack accessible thresholds, transfer space, seats and controls. It is noted that these showers are intended for fire fighter use only, and that ADA-compliance is optional.



iii. First Floor Women's Room

This room is also not designated as accessible. The exterior signage is not ADA-compliant. The interior of the toilet room is non-compliant in several respects:

- Insufficient clearance between the toilet and lavatory (60" clear space at the back wall is required for the toilet)
- Rear wall grab bar is missing.
- Insufficient space between toilet and opposite wall (42" required, 31" provided)
- The bottom edge of the mirror is mounted above the maximum 40" limit.
- Supply and waste piping beneath the lavatory is not covered or insulated.
- Lavatory lacks lever-handle faucets.
- Door hardware and clearance is non-compliant.

We note that the room is probably too small to be made fully accessible.



- e. Emergency communication equipment
 - i. The presence or extent of a fire alarm system, including pull stations, detectors and horn/strobe units was not verified at the time of our inspection.

 - f. Issues with access to other specialized services
 - i. None noted.
6. BARRIERS THAT LIMIT ACCESS TO EXISTING BUILDING
- a. Description of each barrier and nature of limitation
 - i. Condition of parking and pathway surfacing.

Parking area and accessible route are in generally fair condition, but slopes exceed ADA maximums. A van-accessible space is not identified.
 - ii. Ramps and doors

The main entrance door has a non-compliant landing and threshold.
 - iii. Signage and service locations

Signage is generally non-compliant, as discussed above.
 - iv. Restroom facilities

There are partially-accessible restrooms at the main floor level, but not all elements are compliant. See above for additional detail.
 - v. Service windows and counters

Service windows and counters exceed the ADA maximum height.
 - vi. Interior doors and doorways

Doors typically lack accessible hardware. Many doorways lack the required latch-pull side clearance, due to architectural configuration or furniture interference.

7. SHORT TERM SITE IMPROVEMENTS

a. Accessible Parking

- i. In conjunction with reconstruction / realignment of the entry walkway or ramp, relocate accessible parking spaces. Ensure compliant (1:48 maximum) slopes at parking spaces and access aisle(s). Provide a designated van-accessible space.

b. Entry Walkway and Landing

- i. Reconfigure walkway to provide level landings and ADA-maximum slopes. Depending on location of accessible path, the walkway may need to be redeveloped as a ramp with compliant railings, etc. Provide raised landing within ½" of the interior floor elevation. Where possible, provide a direct accessible walkway to the public sidewalk on Center Street.

8. LONG TERM SITE IMPROVEMENTS

a. None noted

9. SHORT TERM BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

a. Entrance Threshold and Door

In conjunction with walkway and exterior landing modifications noted above, install new entrance doorway with compliant threshold, hardware and operation. A power operator is recommended for consistency with other Town buildings.

b. Interior Signage

Provide consistent ADA-standard signage for all accessible doorways, routes and spaces.

c. Door Hardware – priority items

Provide lever-handle hardware at any doors expected to be used by the general public. Ensure single-action release (from the room or exit side) of doors subject to locking (i.e., no separate deadbolts, etc.)

d. Service Window and Counter – accessible communication

Reconfigure one or both service windows to provide a maximum service height of 36". Lower some or all of the writing counter to ADA-compliant height.

e. Door Clearances – furniture interference

Remove or relocate furniture to allow 18" clear at the latch-pull side of doors, plus 12" clear at the latch *push* side where the door is equipped with a closer.

10. LONG TERM BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

a. Door Hardware –

Provide lever-handle hardware at remaining doors. Include tactile warning on backside of handle at doors to hazardous locations

b. Door Clearances and Swings

Reconfigure door openings and/or change door swings to allow 18" clear at the latch-pull side of doors, plus 12" clear at the latch push side where the door is equipped with a closer.

c. Toilet Facilities

Provide at least one ADA-compliant toilet room for public and administrative staff. Subject to regulatory approval, this may be allowed as a unisex facility. The larger locker/shower/toilet room may be considered for firefighters' use only.